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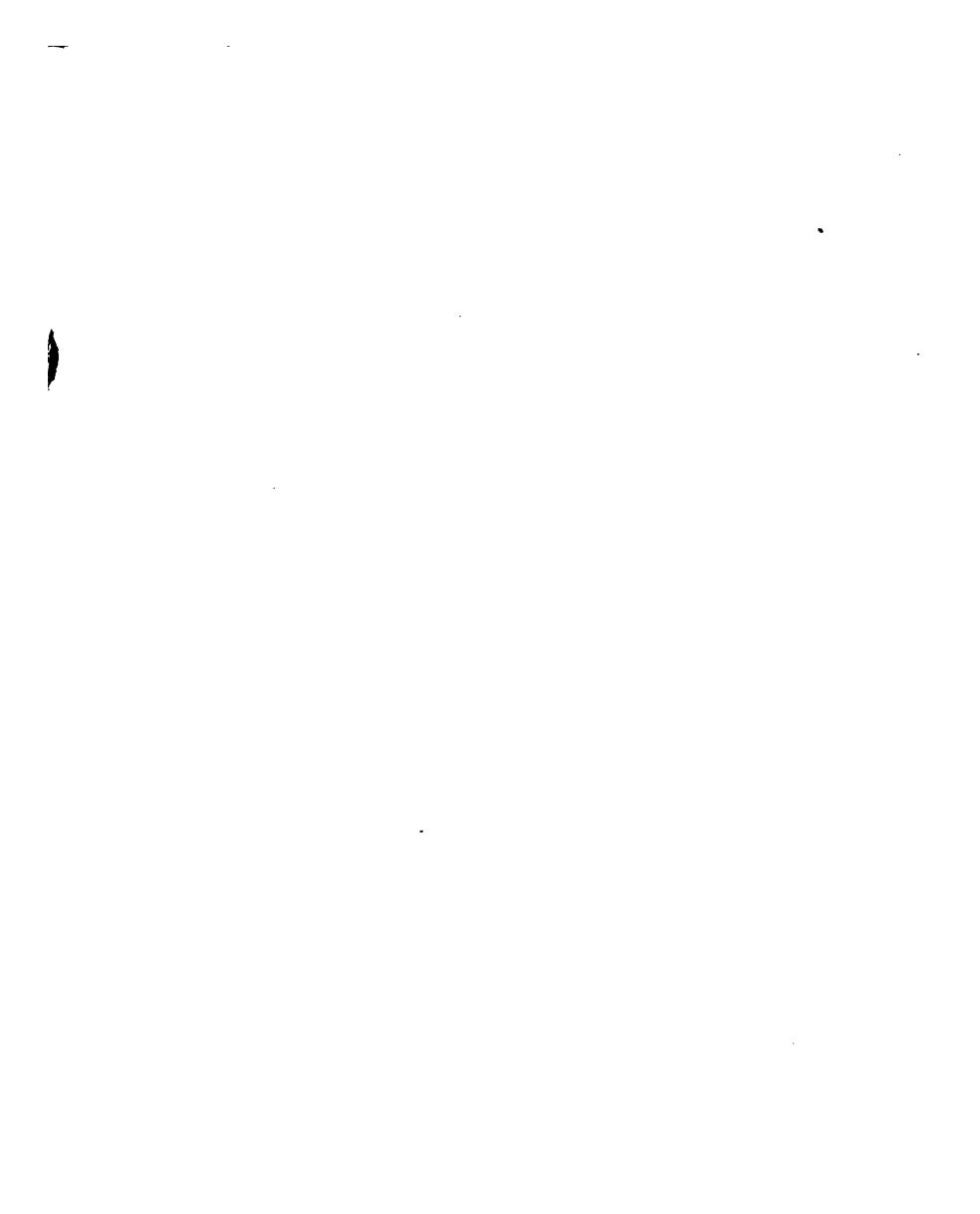
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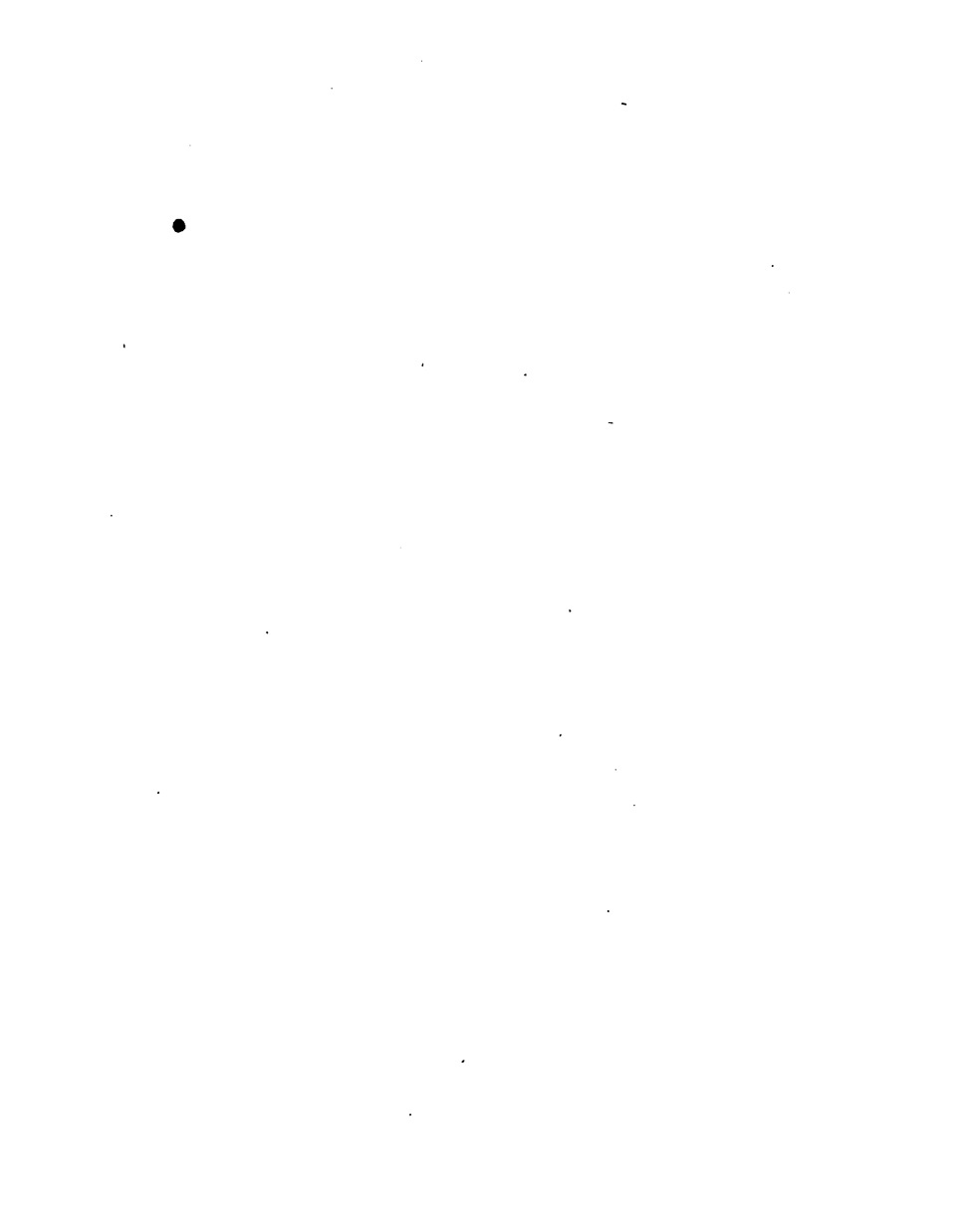
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TALES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

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A KING PLAY

AND

EARL GERALD.

BY

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*&c.*

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## A KING PLAY.\*

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ONE fine evening, at the close of the summer of 1485, the streets of the good old city of Oxford were almost deserted on account of the sultry heat. Young collegians, grave professors, learned doctors, and portly citizens, went by scores to bathe, or amuse themselves in boats upon the river; and the thrifty dames meanwhile set open every lattice to welcome the cool current of evening air.

Only the maidens stood, or sauntered in groups before the doors, discussing all the little gossip of their neighbourhood; and parties of children chased each other in and out, and pursued their sports undisturbed, in the almost empty streets—caring nothing for the heat, not they, except that for

\* My readers, I trust, will excuse my adoption of the quaint title of "A KING PLAY," more strictly applicable to the religious dramas enacted in the Middle Ages, in churches and monasteries, at Christmas-tide, and generally representing the homage of the kings or wise men of the East at the Cradle of Bethlehem; but this title, in a *literal* signification, seemed to suit so exactly the royal episode in the life of Lambert Simnel, that I could not forbear adopting it.

the moment it secured them freer space for their amusements.

A party of bare-headed boys had got up a mimic procession, and marched to the rude music of frying-pans and cleavers, wooden drums, tin whistles, and the like; while banners of coloured kerchiefs, and fragments of old tapestry, waved over their heads.

One lad was mounted astride an immense dog, by way of courser; the animal being muzzled, and led by reins of rope at either side. The feet of the mounted hero did walking duty as he rode — what matter! he wore a battered plume upon his head, a gay scarf across his breast, and carried a tin sword, like a mace-bearer. He was evidently personating a grand dignity to his entire satisfaction, his whole air inviting the homage and admiration of his companions.

While thus amusing themselves, their ranks were thrown into some confusion by suddenly hearing the sound of horses' hoofs upon the stone pavement, and from a cross street, there emerged four horsemen.

The two who rode foremost appeared to be a nobleman and a priest, the two who followed, were their armed retainers. These last hurried forward, as soon as they perceived some obstacle in the way of their masters, and were preparing to apply their whips for the dispersion of our little friends; but the gentlemen



at once ordered them to forbear, and return to the rear, while they themselves pulled up their horses, and laughingly desired that the procession might continue.

This little incident had considerably "fluttered the Volscians;" but the plumed hero of the day thanked the strangers, waved his sword, and then gave his orders to his retinue in a voice of authority. The discordant music recommenced, the march was resumed, and the horsemen, having paused till all had passed, emerged from the cross street and brought up the rear.

"Thus the boy apes the man, and the humble the great!" said the priest, smiling.

"Just so! but did you notice the little fellow with the feather and sword? I declare he is the very image of my young cousin of Warwick,—he might pass anywhere for a son of poor Clarence."

"Ha! do you say so! Let us ride on, and look at him again."

They did so,—but the zest of the play was now over, and the mimic procession had already broken up, for most of the boys preferred gazing after the strangers. Their little chief had dismounted from the dog, and having freed himself from the battered plume, stood wiping his hot brow with his sleeve, as he coolly returned the gaze of the horsemen.

"There is a strong likeness to the Duke of Clarence, certainly," said the priest to his companion,—"and his age, I think, must also correspond with that of little Warwick."

"Though both age and likeness were perfect, what then?" rejoined the nobleman, who was the Earl of Lincoln, nephew of Clarence, and his royal brothers Edward IV, and Richard III.

"*Something* might come of it,—something might be made of it," replied Richard Simon the priest. "We are told that young Warwick is still alive and well, in the Tower; if so, why might he not escape?—indeed a rumour is already afloat to that effect; and if he be dead, as we rather fear, yet the world knows not of it, and would believe us either way if we proclaimed aloud, 'Lo, here is he who should be your king!—here is the last scion of the house of York. Down with usurping Richmond!' If I now declared this to be the case, could you disprove it?"

"Supposing I could not, what follows?"

"This follows:—it is not you and I alone, my lord, that hate this Henry Tudor; there are many Yorkists yet remaining who smother their discontent deep in their hearts only for want of a rallying point. That boy there, if we declare him of the royal blood, may yet gather an army to our cause, and be led in a

triumphant procession somewhat different from that of to-day."

"We must think further of it," returned the earl, thoughtfully. "Meanwhile let us speak to this lad, and see what stuff he is made of. Holloa boy!—what great one did you fancy yourself, when you bestrode that dog, sword in hand, awhile since?"

"I meant no harm," said the boy, hanging his head a little. "We were playing, and I was the king."

"And would you like it if the play were earnest?" asked the earl. "Did you never hear that kings sleep on thorns?"

"I wouldn't mind the thorns; I should like it. I should like to have every one doing as I bid them."

"And what is your name, my bold little man, and where do you live?"

"My name is Lambert Simnel, honourable sir; my father lives in the High Street, and bakes all the bread for University College, and others too; and my mother—"

"Enough;—here is some money to make merry with your playmates. Go!"

The Earl of Lincoln and Richard Simon the priest, spent that night and the several following days at the Bishop's Palace, where the earl was an expected

guest. They had much conversation together upon the subject already started between them; and having formed a rough outline of their future plans, they took into their councils, cautiously, one after another of such leading gentlemen as were known to have belonged to the Yorkist party.

The extraordinary resemblance accidentally discovered between Simnel, the baker's son, and the little Earl of Warwick, son of the murdered Clarence, appeared like an omen to cheer the spirits of the fallen party, and all agreed that, with careful handling, it might be turned to their advantage, especially as the boy was gifted with natural grace of manner, and appeared to have quickness of wit, and aptitude for counterfeit representation.

One evening shortly afterwards, Simnel the baker, with his wife, children, and apprentices, were seated at a plain but substantial supper in their kitchen in the High Street, when an emphatic, though not very loud knock, was several times repeated upon the outer door.

The party looked at each other a little startled and surprised, for the hour was an unusual one for a stranger's visit; but they were honest folk, who paid their taxes and their debts, and had nothing to fear,

—so, at a word from the master, one of the apprentices hastened to open the door.

With listening ears, and morsels held in the fingers, but arrested by the spell of expectation in progress to the parted lips, the little party waited a few moments, —and then the apprentice returned, followed by a tall figure closely muffled in a horseman's cloak.

He paused on the threshold, scanning with a bright and penetrating glance the wondering family circle; then dropping the cloak, and extending his right hand, he uttered the reassuring word, "*Benedicite* !"

All crimson with excitement, up started the boy Lambert, exclaiming, "It is the priest who rode by and spoke to me the other evening ! Daddy, it is the same !"

The party rose respectfully; and the mother, curtseying low, stammered out the hope that her boy had done nothing wrong, of which the holy father had come to complain.

"No, no, good dame; sit down again, and be at ease. I will join your supper, by your leave, Master Simnel, and afterwards we will talk."

"Have you nothing better than this stuff for supper?" cried the good man rather sharply to his wife, and looking with contempt on the viands which he was eating with infinite relish a few minutes before,

—"Get a fresh wheaten loaf at least, and a tankard of ale."

"It does not need," replied Father Simon, seating himself on the oak bench beside Lambert; "my little friend here will make me welcome, I am sure, to a share of his manchet and milk."

"Ay, truly; hearty welcome to what I have, and wish it were better!" replied the boy with frank cordiality.

"That's a fine fellow!" said Father Simon, patting him on the head. And presently, eating, drinking, and chatting together, the whole party were comparatively at ease; the baker troubling himself, however, how he could display the utmost hospitality, and the baker's wife casting a wistful glance at times towards her boy, as if mistrustful that the notice he had received might lead to evil.

At length the apprentices departed to watch the ovens; the young children closed their heavy eyes, and drooped their heads upon their plump, rosy arms, which rested unheeding on the smeared and crumbstrewn table. The mistress rose and snuffed the long wick of the tall, home-made candle, the master pressed his guest to another horn cup of ale, but the feast was evidently over, and it was time for the conference to begin.

"Hearken to me, friends," said Father Simon, rising as he spoke, and removing from the narrow bench to a comfortable settle by the fire; "I have come to speak to you about this boy of yours."

The mother clasped her hands together, and wrung them silently, as if she would say, "I knew it; my heart predicted it!"

"And what of him?" cried the father, somewhat huskily, but sturdily the while, as though saying, "If you mean harm to him, I am here to defend him."

The priest, apt in reading the hidden feelings of the heart, smiled quietly. "He is a fine lad, a very fine lad, this Lambert of yours! I took a fancy to him among all his playmates the other evening; and if you will give him to me, I will provide for him, and educate him, and put him in the way of becoming a great man."

"My Lambert, my first-born!" ejaculated the mother, with mixed emotions.

"A very great man, if he turns out well, as I hope."

"But he will not be ours any more," said the baker. "What will a great man be to *us*, even if he lives to be one?"

"Nay, but we shall *know* he is ours, and be proud of him," joined in the wife; "and then—he won't, he

can't forget his first home and his mother,—canst thou, Lambert, my own boy?"

"No, mother; and it will be all the grander, when I am great, to remember this place and the loaves." And snatching one from the table, he flung it up to the roof with a burst of irrepressible laughter, and capered wildly about the room for a few moments in boyish glee. Then suddenly controlling himself, he stood composedly before the priest, and said, "That is not very worthy of a great man, I suppose, sir;—are you ashamed of me?"

"No, boy; but you must learn self-control, and many other things, before you can be great enough to control others; above all, you must learn to obey."

"Yes, I know; if my parents say I cannot go with you, I must obey them."

"True; but your parents are too wise, I imagine, to refuse such advantages as those I offer you."

"But I should like, nevertheless, by your reverence's leave, to know more particularly what you mean to make of the lad," said the baker.

"He is too brave a boy for the church," timidly suggested the mother.

"Leave him to me," replied Father Simon; "he must be educated and trained first, and then we shall see what he is fit for; but he shall rise according to



his merits, and never be chargeable to you any more. And as I see you have five other young ones, you may well spare this one in these bad times, to profit by the foolish fancy I have taken to him. Only make up your minds at once, for he must go with me to-night, or never."

"To-night!" ejaculated the mother.

"To-night! so much the better!" cried the boy; "there will be no time for sorrow to spoil the joy, and I can kiss sister Maude and the little ones without having them crying and clinging to me. And, mother, I often gave you trouble; but you will forgive me when I'm gone away, and love me always, I know."

The mother was now sobbing aloud; the father grasped one hand of his first-born, as if he would draw him closer to his side, and the boy felt the pressure, but the other hand was firmly held by the stately priest. Presently, with a gulping sound in the throat, forcing back his emotions, young Lambert withdrew the hand his father held, and *both* were instantly clasped by the white fingers of Richard Simon.

"It seems thou wishest to leave us, lad," said the father, in a low, husky tone. "Go, then, and thou wilt, since it is to be for thy good."

"At once!" whispered the priest in the boy's ear; "it is even now time."

Then the boy threw himself into his mother's arms, and at length wept and sobbed freely; he could not help it when she was shaking all over with her grief.

"I will love you always, mother; if I am rich, you shall have presents; if I am great, I will do great things for all of you."

"Are you going, indeed—going *now*, my own boy? Oh, not so sudden!" sobbed the poor mother. "Holy father, not so sudden, I pray! I must make ready his clothes—I must—"

"We must be far hence ere morning," replied Father Simon. "No clothes are needed, for to-morrow your Lambert will be dressed like a baron's son."

"My darling boy! But am I not to see him again?"

"Not to-morrow,—not till we return together to Oxford, after a time. And mark me, friends—let there be no needless gossiping about this. If neighbours inquire for the boy, it is enough to say that he was growing masterful at home, and you have sent him with a monk you knew well, to learn scholarship in his monastery."

"Aye, that may be best," said the father.

"Come, now, boy, I can wait no longer," resumed Simon. "Trust in my promises, good people, and fear

nothing for the lad. He will be great I tell you; and if he live, who knows but his name may go down in history to all generations. Benedicite!" And the priest and the boy passed from the baker's kitchen.

Benedicite! Between the first and the last utterance of that word, a life seemed to have passed away to that weeping mother—a new life to have opened to that eager, ambitious, but light-hearted boy.

The priest hurried his young companion through several streets in silence, but presently paused where a glimmering light was seen beneath an archway. Here a group of men and horses were in waiting; and after the interchange of a few whispered words, the boy was mounted before a trooper, the rest of the party sprung into their saddles, and they rode quietly on, to the western gate of the city.

Here passwords were interchanged with the sentry; and after a brief delay, the gate was opened, and they rode forth, leaving the noble city of Oxford behind them.

They travelled far that night. At first, the novelty of his position rendered the boy acutely vigilant, and if any one had suggested the idea of his sleeping, it would have seemed to him impossible; but the night

air acted as an anodyne, and ere long he slept soundly, sheltered by the trooper's cloak and supported by his arm, and noted nothing of the road. When he awoke, it was already day, and a stately castle was in view, towards which they rode.

The sentinel marked their approach, and it seemed that they were expected, for the drawbridge was already lowered, and the great gate open, when they reached the spot....

Lambert Simnel was fully awake then. The tramp of the horses on the paved court-yard, the clang of the tired troopers' arms as they dismounted heavily from their steeds, the bustle of numerous liveried retainers hurrying to and fro, presented to his mind so new, so grand, and so exciting a scene, that he was intoxicated to feel that he was himself an actor in it, and one of no mean importance.

He now recognised in the principal personage of the party with whom he had travelled, the same nobleman who had spoken to him in the streets of Oxford; and the priest, Richard Simon, coming up to him as soon as he dismounted, informed him that it was the Earl of Lincoln, nephew of the late Kings Edward IV and Richard III, but that the castle belonged to Lord Lovel; and then, with a show of respect which was equally new and delightful to him, he was conducted

with the rest, into the great hall of the castle, where Lord Lovel, a handsome man who still might be called young, stood ready to receive them.

He welcomed the earl cordially as an expected friend, received the priest politely as a stranger, and then his eye rested with some surprise upon the boy, as one whom he thought was out of his proper place.

The Earl of Lincoln, observing this, took the hand of the youth, and said in a low tone, "I will present him to you in due form when we have privacy: I pray you note him not now; but let us, to breakfast, for I perceive your hospitable board is all prepared, and in truth, the journey has sharpened all our appetites."

Lord Lovel accordingly led his guests without further delay to the table, which was abundantly furnished with solid viands and foaming tankards; and without troubling themselves with other personal preparation than that of laying aside their cloaks and hats, the whole party set earnestly to work to satisfy their hunger.

Lord Lovel presided at the board; the earl, the priest, and the boy sat near him, somewhat apart from the troopers and members of the household. Lambert's heart bounded with exultation to find that *his*

place was already amongst the great,—he, the baker's son !

Apt and imitative by nature, his protectors smiled to see how quickly he observed and adopted their manners at table ; for example, at the beginning of repast, he took a great piece of meat in his hand, and ate from it, as a hungry man might bite from a slice of bread ; but ere it ended, he cut the meat into mouthfuls on the trencher, and put them more neatly into his mouth. Forks, it will be remembered, were quite unknown conveniences until long after this period ; and the carver was wont to steady the joint with a dagger, and cut it, one might say, with a broadsword, so formidable was the knife employed.

Again, at the commencement of the meal, he frequently wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, as we still may see our ploughmen and under servants do ; but ere he rose from table young Lambert had learned to wipe his lips on a napkin, *like a lord*.

“What think you of him ?” asked the priest of the earl, as they turned aside.

“He will answer our purpose if he is only as docile as he is quick of apprehension. But had we not better let him know at once the part he is to assume ?”

“Agreed,” replied Father Simon ; “but we will

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rest a while first, and at twelve I shall bring him to your chamber."

At the appointed hour they met as agreed ; and the door being carefully fastened, the elders seated themselves, and the boy stood anxiously before them.

In a somewhat stern voice the priest demanded,—  
"Tell me, Lambert, son of Simnel the baker of Oxford, do you regret your home and your kindred?"

The boy hesitated a few seconds, and then firmly answered "No."

"If you do, say so, and we will take you back to them ; if you do not, you must forget from this hour—or seem to forget—the name you have borne, the place where you were bred, the mother in whose arms you wept last night, and everything that you have known or done in your life ; and you must believe—or pretend to believe—that you are another. Can you do this, think you?"

A succession of emotions passed over the youth's intelligent countenance as he listened to this address ; but at the conclusion he looked up brightly, shook the waving locks from his brow, and answered firmly, "I think I can."

"It is only acting a part, as you were doing when

first we saw you," interposed the earl; "but then you must never, on any pretext, dismount from your dog's back, do you understand? No earl, no priest, nor serving-men with whips, must make you forget that you are—"

"Who?" demanded the boy, every feature glowing with eagerness. "Since I am not to be Lambert Simnel, who is it that I am to pretend to be?"

"Did you ever hear of the Duke of Clarence?" demanded the earl.

"What! King Edward's brother that was drowned, they say, in a cask of wine in London Tower?"

"The same."

"Well, of course I heard of that; every one was talking of it; it seemed so strange."

"You of all others should remember; you are to believe yourself his son."

"His son—the Duke's son?"

"Yes; soon after his arrest and death you will remember you were removed from Court, lest harm might befall you also, and were kept in the strictest seclusion during the remainder of your uncle Edward's life. Richard, however, had you under his eye during his regency and reign, and scarcely had you heard the news of his defeat and death on Bosworth Field when you were seized and shut up in the Tower by the



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usurper Henry of Richmond. This, of course, you were old enough to remember distinctly."

"I shall remember everything you wish, my lord, in a little time, especially the dulness of my prison chamber."

"I hope so. It is to be regretted that, owing to these circumstances, your education has been a good deal neglected, and your manners have lost their early courtliness; still, being of such noble lineage, you cannot possibly be boorish or love low companions or vulgar sports: do you understand? You naturally, as a high-born gentleman, expect the vassals to wait on you, but you conduct yourself kindly to them, without allowing familiarity."

"I can soon do all that, I think, because these people, I suppose, will believe that I really am what you say; but I am puzzled in this—I am to seem quite as great as you or any other earl, I am to be your kinsman, yet you, who know that I am only the baker's son, will think I forget myself if I give myself lordly airs. How am I to behave to you?"

"Shrewdly put, my boy; but you must remember that, though of royal birth, you are *but* a boy, and must give yourself no airs to your elders, but treat them with all due respect, especially Father Simon, who is your tutor."

“Very well; all this will be famous fun, and I will play my part as well as I can. Only I shall require to be reminded sometimes, my lord, whom I saw and what I did when I was at court. But I much wonder—may I ask it?—why you have taken this trouble. I know, of course, that it is not for my sake—but I should like to know the end of it all.”

“You have learned quite enough for one lesson, and are a toward lad; but now, Master Mummer, it is time you should dress for your character. Strip off your coarse jerkin and shirt, and truss yourself in these.”

Here was a new delight! and we cannot undertake to say that for this day and the next there was not an unseemly habit of casting down the eyes to survey the rich garments, and a tendency of the fingers to stroke the soft pile of the velvet hose, or play with the hilt of the dagger and tassel of the belt; however, by the help of reprimands and a few days' custom, these comely garments became familiar things.

Francis Lord Lovel, was well known to the Earl of Lincoln as one who hated the house of Lancaster with so cordial a hatred, that he was little likely to hesitate in joining any plot for Henry's overthrow. Indeed he had already been openly in arms against him; scarcely was he seated on the throne, when, together with Sir

Henry Stafford and his brother, he had raised an army to oppose him ; but the army had melted away before a proclamation of free pardon, and his confederate, Sir Henry Stafford, had paid for the abortive rebellion with his life. Lovel escaped, and was suffered to remain in peace ; but the failure rankled in his mind, and seemed to add another injury to those already endured in the death of all his kindred fallen in the wars, and in the loss of his office of Lord Chamberlain, conferred by Richard III in recognition of the services and sacrifices suffered in the Yorkist cause.

While Henry ruled, his ambition could find no field, he must needs walk through the shady by-ways of life ; so the time wore on in discontent, until some hope was inspired by a message from the Earl of Lincoln, proposing to visit him, as he had something of moment to impart.

That night therefore, when the other inmates of the castle were in repose, Lincoln put his pupil's talents for deception to their first direct proof. He introduced him in form to Lord Lovel as the Earl of Warwick, escaped by the aid of Father Simon and others from his captivity in the Tower, and begged his temporary protection for the fugitive.

Lovel, of course, received the story as it was told, and welcomed it with joy, as he would have welcomed

any other pretext for a new revolution ; it was not for him to examine too closely the pretensions of the youth ; he might be Warwick ; and if not, he would answer his purpose just as well.

He asked him a few questions for form's sake ; told him some anecdotes of his father and his royal uncles, and finally pledged himself to his cause while he had a soldier to command, or a gold piece to expend.

Lambert expressed his gratitude and his sense of his unchanging loyalty in very suitable terms, and that night the conspiracy was fairly afoot.

The Earl of Lincoln departed on the following day with his train, in order to excite no suspicion of treason in the minds of any loyal subjects who might have taken note of the conference ; but such obscure guests as the priest and the boy, it was judged might remain safely in the castle without exciting attention.

On his part, the earl took shipping for Flanders, and repaired to the court of the widowed Duchess of Burgundy, whom he hoped to interest in her reputed nephew's cause.

As to the boy, he was kept very quiet for a few days under the tutelage of Father Simon ; but when his active spirit began to show some symptoms of weariness at this retirement, Lord Lovel presented his young guest with a well-managed horse, and he was

presently initiated into the mysteries of the tilting-yard and the use of arms. These exercises delighted him, and reconciled him to all that was irksome in his position, while on his part he showed an aptitude in all things, which fully answered the hopes of his trainers.

The boy continued in strict seclusion under the care of the priest Simon during the several following months; but occasionally, on the arrival of strangers, he was brought forward and introduced to them as young Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick.

On these occasions he acquitted himself to admiration. The noble guests usually remarked upon his striking likeness to his father Clarence, and would sometimes question him as to his recollection of that unfortunate nobleman. Then the *artless boy* would tell some childish reminiscence of King Edward's court in the most natural way in the world; or perhaps, with trembling voice, would describe his farewell visit to his poor father in the Tower; when he, who had always had a laugh and a merry word for his boy till then, wept as he embraced him, and bade him be thankful that he had no brother.

From this he would sometimes pass on to his own captivity, and how long and wearisome the monotonous days appeared till the hope of liberation dawned.

Faithful friends and kinsmen found means to bribe his jailor, and at length the escape was accomplished—he had the story perfect in all its details—and since then he had remained in the charge of dear Father Simon, whom he loved like a second father.

All this hung well together, and no cross-questioning embarrassed him ; but then, as Father Simon failed not to remind him, it was the cross-questioning of friends willing to believe, not of enemies eager to find contradictions and errors. If by chance he was at any time led beyond his depth, and interrogated about persons whom he ought to have known, but of whom he had not learned the necessary particulars, he would laugh carelessly, saying, “ Oh, I forget ; I was such a little boy then ! but I recollect about the same time ”—then off again upon some safer track of reminiscence.

In the course of the winter, a confidential messenger arrived from Flanders, giving an account of the good success of the Earl of Lincoln, and inviting Lord Lovel, in the name of the Duchess of Burgundy, to return with him to assist in organizing their plans for a decisive movement in the spring.

He hastened there accordingly, leaving to Father Simon the management of affairs in England, as well as the further training of the young pretender.

From their foreign asylum the two noblemen carried

on negotiations with Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, Henry's deputy in Ireland, whom they had every reason to believe would prove faithful to the House of York ; and at length, all things proceeding according to their wishes, they judged that the conspiracy was ripe, and that the reapers must bestir themselves and hasten to the field.

It was a joyful day to our young adventurer when a letter at length arrived, charging the priest to lose no time in conducting the Earl of Warwick to Dublin. A small ship would be found awaiting them at an obscure port of South Wales, and the Lords Lincoln and Lovel, with a foreign army, if all went well, would have arrived in Dublin before them, to give them welcome.

Father Simon, already expecting the summons, lost no time in obeying it, and an unimpeded journey and favourable voyage brought them to their haven at the expected time.

The plot was ripe, and it promised to be a very pretty plot, its ramifications extending, on the one hand, to the Continent ; on the other, to Ireland. Indeed, these distant points were the two feet by which it was to be put in motion.

It may be fairly doubted whether the originators of this conspiracy intended to make any other use of

Lambert Simnel than as a cat's-paw to tear Henry of Richmond from the throne. The Earl of Lincoln, had he succeeded thus far, no doubt designed to get rid of the pretended Warwick, and himself assume the crown, in right, not only of near kindred, but by the further claim that Richard III had appointed him his heir, in case he had no issue. The widowed Duchess of Burgundy, sister of the late kings, had seen with anguish and indignation the destruction of her three brothers and their offspring, and the utter ruin of the house of York, and welcomed her nephew Lincoln, a sister's son, with mournful joy, to her quiet court in the Netherlands. That joy was much increased when he gave her the news that the son of her brother George of Clarence yet lived, and that an insurrection was preparing in his favour, for which he besought her aid.

She eagerly undertook to furnish a body of troops for the enterprise, as soon as it appeared to promise success; and whether she was at this time aware that, though Warwick indeed was alive, it was a counterfeit for whom she pledged her aid, may admit a doubt.

It is certain, however, that the Earl of Lincoln prevailed so far as to obtain from her a body of 2000 choice German mercenaries, under Colonel Swart, a commander of noted valour, and with these he em-



barked for Ireland in the pleasant month of May, A.D. 1486.

No storms disturbed the arrangement,—all happened according to the programme; and when the little ship which bore the pretended Warwick anchored in Dublin Bay, the foreign vessels had already newly arrived.

When the boy, scarcely recovered from sea-sickness, went on deck, he felt transported to another world. A bright sun lit up the beautiful harbour, dotted over with ships of various build, their many-coloured banners floating gaily on the breeze. The decks of those near him were crowded with soldiers in glittering armour, and down their sides richly-attired men were descending into boats, which rowed rapidly ashore; the quays too, were crowded with people.

He also, with Father Simon, descended into a boat; the others fell into a double line, and let them pass between, while on every side arose loud acclamations.

"They are welcoming the young Plantagenet," said the priest; "why does he not return the salutation?"

A flush of delight and surprise passed over the boy's face as he looked at his guardian; but at once he seized the position, and waving his plumed cap on high, he stood on the poop, and bowed with hand on heart, to the right and the left.

"Attend now!" said Father Simon impressively. "This is a crisis in your destiny;—a false step now, may ruin you and all who have made you the head of their party. Let no foolish vanity turn your brain; remember that you are but a painted mummer, acting a part before a selfish audience, who will tear you in pieces if you fail to please them. Have you nerve for it?"

"I think I have."

"Then mark me. I can already distinguish Kildare, the deputy of Ireland, upon the quay. Observe him, —that tall, powerful man, a little apart, in front of the soldiers, is he. The moment you land hasten quickly up to him—fear nothing, for he expects you—and dropping on one knee, in a clear voice, so that the surrounding people may hear, entreat his protection for Edward Plantagenet, heir of the royal house of York, against the usurper Henry. He will receive you: thus much is arranged between us; but what follows will greatly depend upon the mood of the populace."

Another minute, and they touched the shore. "Now!" whispered Father Simon in his ear, and at once the youth sprung from the boat, and running up to the deputy, knelt before him. "My lord, permit a suppliant to throw himself at your feet, and entreat your protection!"

“Who are you, young man, and against whom do you seek protection?”

“I am Edward Plantagenet, the nephew of two kings of England, and cousin of a third,” cried Simnel, proudly, as he rose to his feet. “I am the son of George of Clarence, and having escaped from the Tower of London, where I was imprisoned from the day when Henry of Richmond assumed the crown of Richard, I now implore your powerful protection against the usurper, and your aid in recovering my rights!”

“Hear you this, my lords and people?” cried the deputy of Henry, looking round upon the assembled multitude; “hear you this, my faithful soldiers? Edward Plantagenet, the son of Clarence, the grandson of that Richard, Duke of York, who governed Ireland so wisely that his name is engraved on your hearts, stands here a suppliant to us all. He seeks our aid and protection against wrong and tyranny. Shall we deny it?”

“No, no!” was shouted on every side. “York! York! Plantagenet for ever!”

“Why, this is well, my friends. I love to see your feelings roused in the cause of justice; but we must be cautious here, and not rashly rouse the anger of Henry of Richmond.”

"A York ! a York !" again shouted the crowd.

"But are we, then, to believe the tale he tells ? I see, indeed, the lineaments of the family ; but we must do nothing rashly. Is there no one here, young man, who can vouch for your identity ?"

"That will I, his nearest kinsman," said the Earl of Lincoln, stepping to the side of the youth. "I declare him to be Edward, Earl of Warwick, son of Clarence, my wife's brother, and lately a prisoner in the hands of the usurping Henry of Richmond."

"Down with him ! down with the tyrant !" broke in the populace ; "down with the usurper !"

"His aunt of Burgundy," resumed Lord Lincoln, "has sent an army to support his claims. Lord Lovel and other English friends are ready to bring a force into the field ; but we seek in Ireland a secure resting-place, and still further aid in our just enterprise."

"Both shall you have, so far as in me lies," replied the deputy. "What say you, soldiers and citizens : will ye have Plantagenet, or Henry Tudor for your king ?"

"Plantagenet for ever !" shouted the troops ; and the populace echoed the cry.

During the progress of this little drama, the disembarkation of troops had been quietly going on.

Colonel Swart and a portion of his iron-clad veterans lined the shore. Lord Lovel and his followers, and a few other English gentlemen and their armed retainers, crowded the quays, so that there was no more standing room, and the mob were pressed back into the adjoining streets, where they loudly repeated the cries which they had caught up, drawing all the inhabitants from the houses with their clamour as they swept along.

This was just as the Earl of Kildare had desired—voices enough, and crowd enough, to make it appear that the whole city was in an uproar, and demanded the young Plantagenet for their king.

Beloved by his citizens, the deputy knew how to rule them or to lead them, and soon succeeded in restoring sufficient order for his purpose. A sort of procession was formed, in which young Simnel walked at his side, and the Earl of Lincoln and Lord Lovel followed close behind.

“A Plantagenet! The white rose for ever! Down with the red!” shouted the mob as they advanced. “A new king! another new king!” cried another party. “Where is he? which is he? It is little Edward VI. come again, that they said was smothered in the Tower.” “No; it is his brother, that escaped while they were murdering the king,” said another.

"Where are they taking him?" demanded others. "To the cathedral, to be sure," replied the knowing ones; "he is on his way to be crowned."

"Do you hear what they say?" asked the Earl of Lincoln of the Deputy.

"Surely I do; and they are in the right. Once a crowned king, and the revolution takes a solid form: we will do it quickly, as they say, while the city is in the humour. In matters of this sort promptitude is everything. If we stop to delay and consider, legions of difficulties will arise."

"But how—without any kind of preparation?" said Lord Lovel.

"What preparation did Henry of Richmond require? Richard's crown was picked up on the battle-field, and he put it on his head. There is no great trouble in that. Ceremonies may follow when there is leisure, if there needs must be ceremonies."

"But we have not even a crown," still demurred Lovel.

"If we had, it would look like premeditated treason, instead of a spontaneous, popular outburst," said the Lord Deputy.

"Still, some kind of crown must be had, if we are to have a coronation," observed the Earl of Lincoln; "that is good logic, is it not, Father Simon? What say you to this difficulty?"

"Some kind of crown must be found, even if it were a crown of tinsel; which, after all, might be the most appropriate," he added in a whisper.

Lincoln nodded an assent.

"The crown is not the difficulty," said the Lord Deputy; "if that were all, the Blessed Virgin in yon church wears a very pretty one, which she might lend us for the occasion; but the archbishop still refuses to join us, and I would wait the effect of this day's popular demonstration, to see if he changes his mind. At present we will on to the castle; and, if I do not mistake, a couple of days will bring half Ireland over to our party, now that young Warwick is actually among us. Longer than that we will not delay, lest this bubble enthusiasm bursts and vanishes in air."

The Lord Deputy proved right in his conjectures. The public entry of Warwick, and the enthusiasm of the people, decided many who before had wavered, to declare for the Yorkist prince; and although the archbishop still remained opposed to the revolution, it was resolved that the coronation should take place at once, before Henry could even hear a rumour of their proceedings—far less oppose them.

Lambert Simnel had been but three days in Ireland—days of perpetual hurry, excitement, and confusion—

when he found himself conducted to the cathedral church, in order to become a king.

It was rather bewildering certainly, although he had been accustomed to regard this as the possible termination of the proceedings of his friends in his favour.

The populace were encouraged to collect in the path of the procession, for all was to be done as publicly as possible; but every precaution was taken to ensure order, and prevent any possible interruption.

The knights of the Fraternity of St. George, with their guard of two hundred horsemen, formed the van of the procession. A portion of the German troops was the body guard of the prince, and the Lord Deputy had a numerous following of English and Irish nobles.

It is to be supposed that the majority of those concerned, fully believed that the youth thus presented to them was really the royal prince he pretended to be; but even if the Deputy Fitzgerald had not been admitted into the secret of his birth, he must have felt that he acted a traitor's part in crowning another, while ruling Ireland as Deputy for Henry. It is true that Henry had not appointed him to that important office, but finding him in it, had left him undisturbed; but still this did not greatly change the aspect of the case.

However, it was no time to pause; he shook the



dust from his mantle and plumed hat, and with it shook off the thoughts that were troubling his mind, and with a firm step, and something of a reverential demeanour, walked up the central aisle, the rest following his example.

The Lord Mayor of Dublin, with the Aldermen, the Recorder, and other civic dignatories, in obedience to the summons of the Lord Deputy, received them at the entrance. The Bishop of Meath and many other ecclesiastics, awaited the *cortége* in front of the high altar attired in their official vestments; and the time not sufficing to procure anything more suitable, the crown provided for the ceremony was actually the jewelled circlet taken from the statue of the Blessed Virgin in the Dame Church, as suggested by the Lord Deputy.

In a short address that nobleman explained to the assemblage the escape and arrival of the young prince of the line of York, and, appealing to their attachment to his father Clarence, and his grandfather the Duke of York, both of whom had ruled as Lord Deputies, he demanded if they would receive this, their sole surviving descendant, as their king, or ungratefully abandon one who had sought refuge amongst them, confiding in their fidelity to his royal line?

As the sentiments of most of those admitted to the

interior of the edifice had been previously ascertained, the reply was of course unanimous, and the vaulted aisles echoed the cry of "York, York for ever!" which was tumultuously repeated by the expectant crowd without.

The coronation service was read, and the pretended Earl of Warwick, kneeling before the altar, was crowned with the consecrated diadem by the hands of the Bishop of Meath; and the heralds proclaimed him King of England and Ireland by the grace of God, under the name and title of Edward VI.

Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, then kissed his hand as Lord Deputy of Ireland, and the Lord Mayor and all the other notables hastened to offer the same sign of homage and fealty.

Surely

" ——— the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women are but players!"

The doors of the cathedral were then thrown open for the admission of the people, and John Payne, Bishop of Meath, to give the proper solemnity to the ceremonial, preached a coronation sermon, in which he demonstrated to every one's satisfaction the Divine right of kings, and the clear title of this last scion of the royal house of York to sit on the throne of his

ancestors, at present unlawfully possessed by a usurping kinsman.

The sermon was brief, which may have been esteemed by many its greatest merit; and indeed the multitude without, had become so clamorous to behold their new king, that it was quite necessary to enact another scene of the drama. So, forming themselves into a procession according to the rights of precedence, forth they issued, in goodly show, from the porch of the old cathedral of Christ Church; then, with banners flying and trumpets blowing, prepared to march in state through the principal streets to the castle.

But the mob, so good-humoured hitherto, now showed signs of discontent. Being but of boyish stature, they could not see their king, and began to utter some contemptuous jests, and raise a variety of clamorous shouts, which might have ended in a tumult but for a happy expedient of the Deputy.\*

Perceiving at no great distance among the crowd a gentleman, of gigantic stature, named Darcy,† who stood almost head and shoulders above the level of the multitude, he called him to his side and made the young king, crown and all, mount upon his shoulders.

\* Some maintain it was an ancient usage in Ireland.

† Darcy of Platten, County Meath.

Thus elevated, he was conspicuous to all the throng, who laughed and shouted now right merrily, and rent the air with cries of "York ! York ! Long live Edward the Sixth ! The white rose for ever !"

And as the boy was thus borne along through the midst of the shouting populace, all suddenly he thought of the High Street of Oxford, and of the procession in which he there also played the principal part, riding as king upon a muzzled dog ; and he laughed to himself, and wondered what would be the end of the play.

At length the procession halted in front of the castle ; and the boy, standing up on Darcy's shoulders, not ungracefully bowed and waved his hands in thanks to the applauding crowd ; then dropping down, he and the English lords were led by the Deputy into the great hall of the castle, where a sumptuous banquet awaited them.

And ravenously hungry our little king felt after all the excitement and fatigue of the day. Happily the feeling was tolerably universal, so that every one was too fully engaged in satisfying his own appetite to trouble him with any great amount of attention.

Fortunately too, he scarcely needed Richard Simon's admonition to forbear from potations ; he pleaded his

youth, and passed by the wine-cup, for he dreaded lest the effects might lead to such indiscretion of speech as might for ever ruin the brilliance of his career.

When requisite, however, he drank a pledge with a courteous air, and then emptied the cup beneath the table; an act feasible enough in those days, when, instead of Turkey carpets, banquetting halls were thickly strewn with fresh green rushes.

Leaving the numerous guests to carouse at their pleasure, the Lord Deputy and the English leaders withdrew early in the evening to consider their further proceedings, which however, need not here be detailed.

"What, think you, will the king across the water say to our day's work?" inquired Fitzgerald.

"The news will no doubt be to him like the shock of an earthquake," replied Lincoln. "He thinks himself firmly seated, but others can contrive a revolution besides himself."

"I fancy he will be less astonished than you imagine," resumed the Irish earl; "I have good reason to think that he already suspects my loyalty, though he can hardly have been prepared for all that we have done. But as you have been abroad, perhaps you did not hear that, a very short time since, he summoned me to England, wishing, he said, to consult me on affairs

of consequence. No doubt he had discovered that something was brewing, and wished to nip the plot in the bud."

"Nipped, indeed, it would have been if you had been absent when we arrived," said Lincoln; "but how did you resist his command? I had almost said, how *dared* you?—but the Fitzgeralds dare all things."

"This is what I did," replied Maurice of Kildare, smiling at the compliment: "I laid the royal letter before the Parliament of Ireland, and running over a pretty long list of matters that urgently required attention, and perils that might arise in my absence, consulted them as to the reply which I should send.

"Since a Deputy could hardly with propriety decline the flattering invitation of his Sovereign Lord, the Parliament obligingly took upon itself the trouble of replying to the letter, and informed Henry that I could not, without manifest injury to the interests of his realm, leave Ireland at present, and that they therefore trusted he would excuse me from attending upon him. By this device I have gained time at least, and now we have another monarch, and I owe him allegiance no more. Long live Edward the Sixth!"

And how *did* Henry receive the news of the coronation of the son of Clarence?

In truth with much surprise, for though, with his customary vigilance, he had been able to surmise the existence of a plot in which the Yorkist nobles, the Duchess of Burgundy, and the Deputy of Ireland were concerned, yet he had not been able to guess the special form which it would assume; and no wonder, since young Edward, Earl of Warwick, was safe under his own eye, within the strong walls of the Tower.

Absurd however, as the pretensions of this upstart, whoever he might be, appeared to him, yet the eagerness with which he had been received by the English noblemen of the pale, in Ireland, too clearly proved to him the popularity of the house of York. How such popularity had been won is a puzzle to the moral philosopher, since Edward had been a voluptuary, Richard a tyrant, and Clarence weak or worse, whilst *he* was a wise man who held his passions under control. Still Henry chafed throughout his reign under the knowledge of the fact, and was even jealous of his wife, Elizabeth of York, whom he had prudently married, because he believed her to be more popular with the multitude than himself.

To check the spreading of this rebellion however, and convince his good people of London of the false

pretensions of the Irish adventurers, he instantly commanded that young Warwick should be brought forth from the Tower, and slowly led under a strong guard through the most public streets to St. Paul's Church, where his name and title were proclaimed, and the people warned against believing false rumours of his being in Ireland at the head of an army; for if any so asserted of himself, he was a lying upstart and deceiver, worthy only of the gallows.

And then the unfortunate youth was conducted back to his dull prison chamber in the Tower, and guarded with even more vigilance than before. Poor fellow! it was the only glimpse of the outer world which he was destined to have throughout his weary existence.

By this means Henry preserved the tranquillity of the metropolis, but he knew well that the insurrection was gaining strength elsewhere.

At length all was ready for the decisive campaign. It was the summer of 1487; the foreign troops were impatient of their prolonged inaction; Lord Lovel was under arms in England, Lord Maurice Fitzgerald and other nobles of the English pale, had raised a considerable force in Ireland; the ships of transport were in the harbour, the troops, under the command of the



Earl of Lincoln and Colonel Swart, with their young king on board, were all embarked, when Lord Thomas Fitzgerald, brother of the Deputy, unable to resist the infectious excitement of the enterprise, suddenly resigned his office of chancellor, and joined the expedition.

They effected a landing without opposition at Foudrey on the coast of Lancashire, and were joined at once by Sir Thomas Broughton and a band of armed retainers, and shortly afterwards by Viscount Lovel, at the head of a considerable army.

Thus reinforced they marched to York, trusting confidently in a general rising of the people in that stronghold of their party. But they were entirely disappointed in their hopes; the severity of Henry had dispirited the people, and his vigilance had dispersed their customary leaders; besides which, they looked with their invincible national prejudice on the foreigners.

Feeling therefore the necessity of a success to establish their cause, the Earl of Lincoln led his army southward without further delay, and halted near Stoke-upon-Trent, having heard that the royal forces were encamped at Newark.

Henry left them scanty time to repose, but marched at once to meet them.

Both armies were eager for the conflict, and fought

with undaunted valour. The leaders on either side felt that the battle must be a decisive one, and young Simnel, ardent and hopeful, settled it in his mind that as Henry at Bosworth had been crowned upon the battle-field, so now would he be.

But Destiny arranged it otherwise, and having hitherto appeared favourable towards him, now suddenly showed a frowning face. On that first battle-field, where he had hoped to see his name and station established for ever, he, on the contrary, awoke for ever from his dream of royalty.

The combat continued with fierceness for about three hours, and during that time was maintained with doubtful result ; but then it became evident that Henry was gaining the day. Colonel Martin Swart at the head of his brave veterans fell dead in the thickest of the *mêlée*, and the consternation which the loss of their beloved leader caused among the Germans, gave an opportunity which Henry failed not to avail himself of.

He dashed on with his heavy horsemen to break the enemy's wavering lines, and Sir Thomas Broughton, who was galloping up to the support of the Germans, was hurled from his saddle in mid career, and trampled by his own advancing troops ere they could rein in their steeds.

Lord Thomas Fitzgerald, too, and his brother Maurice, were slain on the battle-field to which they had rushed so full of manly vigour, ardour, and sanguine expectations, and four thousand common soldiers shared the fate of their leaders ; while Lambert Simnel, in whose cause all this slaughter had been committed, was taken prisoner, as well as Richard Simon the priest.

While the fate of the other leaders of this disastrous enterprise was only too well known, that of Lord Lovel remained, and must ever remain, doubtful. His body was not found upon the battle-field, but perchance it had been overlooked, or he might have withdrawn wounded, and perished ere he could arrive at a place of refuge.

Several soldiers, however, maintained that they had seen him swim his horse across the Trent unharmed, when the rout became general, and reach the opposite bank without pursuit.

Still he appeared not, nor could Henry discover his place of retreat ; it was therefore generally concluded that he must have been unrecognised among the slain. But on the other hand, a rumour arose which also obtained some credit, namely, that he was secreted among his own retainers at Minster Lovel ; some pea-

sants even averred that they had recognised him on foot in that neighbourhood, on the evening of the day after the battle.

We believe these peasants spoke the truth, and among the various rumours of his fate, adopt one, of which the details may be conjectured to have taken place as follows :

When Lord Lovel became convinced that the cause in which he had embarked was hopeless, being certain that in case of capture he had no mercy to expect from the monarch against whom he had been twice in open arms, he crossed the Trent on horseback as described, and spurred the animal on, until, exhausted with the fatigues of the battle and the flight, it could go no further.

Lovel therefore dismounted, and taking off the trappings by which he might have been recognised, flung them into a pond, and left the animal at large.

He then proceeded on foot through unfrequented byeways familiar to his feet in earlier years, and reached at nightfall a cottage on the outskirts of Minster Lovel, and then he did what the unfortunate have done in every age and every country—he confided in the affection and fidelity of a woman.

His foster-sister dwelt in that humble cottage ; her grey-haired father and her stalwart brothers had been .

with him in the battle, he could not tell her their fate ; but he himself was a fugitive, and sought from her concealment and protection.

She sheltered him that night and the following day in her cottage ; but a detachment of Henry's troops had been seen scouring the neighbourhood for fugitives ;—that was no place of security for him, and when the shadows of evening again fell, she conducted him to a vault beneath a ruined church, of which she had secretly obtained the key.

She had furnished it with a pallet, a small table, and a chair ; she left him food, wine, and a lamp ; what could she more ? Yes, she stayed to converse with him until the dawn of day ; then locking the ivy-hung doorway from without, she stole away, sad-hearted, to her lonely home. Her father and her brothers were absent still !

The time passed very heavily with the poor prisoner until nightfall, when he began to listen for the footsteps of his faithful, humble friend. He complained of his weary hours, and the next evening she brought him a book of prayers, the only volume she possessed ; she thought it might teach him patience. Poor soul ! she had much need of it herself ; her father and her brothers still returned not.

She did what he thought still better in her fol-

lowing visit—she brought him his favourite dog. She had found the poor animal wandering wistfully, as it were, near his residence, as if he missed his master, or perhaps sought him; he came with her willingly, and Lord Lovel, in his delight at caressing the faithful animal, thought himself almost happy. He had a companion now,—he could speak to his dog, and the dog would answer him,

“In happy motions, . . . . .  
Which avail like man’s own speech.”—SHELLEY.

But from this time the girl came to him no more!

What had happened? Had his retreat been discovered, or did she fear it might be? Had she been suspected, and seized by the emissaries of the tyrant? Or could she have forsaken him?

No, that she would never do! But he guessed not the truth. Villagers, wandering over the battle-field, recognised the mangled bodies of her father and brothers, lying in one sad group; they came to her, and abruptly told her the cruel tidings. She had none other to love on earth but them, and, uttering one piercing shriek, she fell down dead at the feet of the messengers.

The door of Lovel’s prison-vault was massive and the lock was strong, the oil was spent in the lamp, so

fire could not sap its strength. The agony of the poor captive's mind, the lingering sufferings of himself and dog, are subjects at which the imagination may glance, but from which the pen shrinks.

Long, long afterwards, when that generation had passed away and the battle of Stoke was only talked of as a thing that happened in their fathers' time, when a new king sat on the throne, and a new form of religion had been introduced into the land, some changes were being made in the ruined church, and the old ivy-covered vault was discovered and opened.

When the door gave way before the blows of the axe, the bystanders pressed forward to the aperture with eager curiosity; and great was their amazement on beholding a richly-dressed man, seated at a table with an open book before him, and a dog lying at his feet.

The figures were entire when first seen, but crumbled rapidly into dust as the current of outer air swept through the vault, so that only some shapeless fragments of bones, a little heap of dust, amongst which were a few small shreds of tarnished gold, remained beside the decaying table, where the group had for a moment been seen almost as if in life.

There was astonishment and awe at first; then arose conjectures, and from these was awakened memory; and

an old mason, leaning on his staff, began to tell how his father used often to wonder by the fireside, o' winter nights, what had become of poor Lord Francis Lovel, for he had seen him after the battle of Stoke, where people said he was slain, and he always thought that he must have concealed himself somewhere in that neighbourhood; so I am thinking, concluded the old mason, that this must be he.

King Henry, delighted with his decided victory, and with getting his upstart rival into his power, was not inclined to press his advantage with undue severity. He called a council of chiefs within his camp, and commanded the *soi-disant* King Edward VI. to be brought before him.

The graceful stripling stood in his presence with an air of such mingled humility and dignity, that all present felt their prepossessions against him melting away. He appeared neither depressed nor defiant, and the light and debonair expression of his youthful features presented so little the aspect of a dangerous conspirator, that, in spite of himself, Henry's features relaxed from their sternness as he looked upon him.

At length he broke silence, saying, in deliberate accents, "Young man, your life is forfeit to the laws! yet, regarding you as the mere tool of others, I incline



to pardon you, on condition that, before these nobles and gentlemen, and me, your king, you confess your imposture, declare your true name and lineage, and implore my clemency."

"Sire," said the prisoner, "I know that my career is over, and it were in vain to deny the truth; I therefore here confess myself to be one of the lowest of your Majesty's subjects, and own the utter falseness of my past pretensions. I am only Lambert Simnel, an Oxford baker's son, and throw myself upon your mercy, humbly imploring your pardon for the trouble I have caused you." With this, bowing his head gracefully, he dropped on one knee before the king, who said, with some emotion, "I grant your life! Boy as you still are in years, I regard you as but a puppet in the hands of others; that priest for one, who was ever at your side, and others. I know them well, and ask you not to denounce them."

"I thank you much, my liege."

"I have said that I grant your life, but not without conditions," resumed Henry. "Treason must not be without its punishment. You must henceforth be content to live in the lowly sphere in which you were born. Can you, who have played the king, renounce for ever all ambitious dreams?"

"I think I can," said Lambert, "since needs I

must. My dreams must be of the past, my life in the present."

"Well said; but since you have so much relish for the life of courts, I will not be too hard upon you;—you still may breathe that magic air. I will appoint you scullion in the royal kitchen—a place I judge not badly suited to a baker's son. What say you to it?"

"It must needs be as you will, my liege."

"But, mark me, never seek to quit your post, nor hope to rise to a higher grade; the moment that you do so your pardon is forfeited. If in the course of time some change comes to you, it must not be by any effort of your own."

"I shall obey, my lord, holding my life as your gift."

"Remove him," said Henry to his guard, "and put him at once in charge of our cook to learn his new service. And now bring in Father Simon."

Richard Simon, though a man of good address and subtle intellect, impressed no one in his favour. He was known as one of the chief originators of the plot; and while his life was protected by his sacred profession, all felt that the sentence of perpetual confinement within the walls of a monastery was no more than just punishment for so flagrant a treason and so artful a plot.

“To-morrow,” said Henry, when the prisoners were thus disposed of, “we shall march northwards and disperse the remnant of this rebellious army, which the Earl of Lincoln still, we hear, holds together in some force, and even seeks to recruit by bribes and promises.

Henry was, as usual, successful in putting down his enemies; an engagement took place, where the Earl of Lincoln was slain, and the army was completely routed. The conquering monarch then returned in triumph to London.

The Earl of Kildare and the other Irish insurgents, on finding the cause they had espoused so ardently, entirely ruined, and many of their kinsmen slain, thought it high time to cry *peccavi*, and hastened to send a deputation to entreat Henry’s forgiveness. They pleaded that they had been carried away by the specious tale of that deceiver, believing him truly to be the son of Clarence, whom they had loved when he dwelt among them, as well as his father, when he had been their governor. This they trusted would partly plead their excuse; but since the falseness of the young man’s pretensions was now apparent to every eye, they returned with twofold eagerness to renew their allegiance to Henry, if he graciously condescended to pardon their past error.

So acute a mind as Henry's no doubt estimated their submission at its true worth, nor could he fail to perceive that if to-morrow the real Earl of Warwick were set at liberty, such loyalty as theirs would again betray his trust. Nevertheless he thought fit to accept their submission, and thus suffer the whole plot to fall into oblivion, and be altogether regarded among past events.

He did not even remove the Earl of Kildare from the important office of Deputy of Ireland, hoping, perhaps, by his clemency and apparent confidence, to attach him more earnestly to his cause; but he took the precaution of sending over Sir Richard Edgecumbe with a body of five hundred chosen troops, to renew the oaths of allegiance of all those who were known to have favoured the rebellion.

It was not long afterwards, however, that Henry had again reason to suspect the loyalty of Kildare and his friends, and with probably very good reason.

Once more, therefore, he summoned him to England, together with the Viscounts Gormanstown, Fermoy, Buttevant, and others; and this time they had no alternative but to obey. The king was at Greenwich when the Irish lords arrived; and instead of citing them all to appear formally before him as suspected criminals, he with admirable policy invited each separately to a private interview.

Having considerable natural discernment into character, he thus had an opportunity of forming his own opinion of each of these persons, who, though holding important offices under his government, were hitherto personally unknown to him.

He at once disclosed to them what he had discovered of their secret projects, overwhelmed them with confusion, and reproved each in such manner as he judged suitable to his individual disposition. More admirable policy could not be shown; for each of these high-spirited gentlemen, being spared from exposure and disgrace, felt under a personal obligation to the monarch he had served so ill; and, to bring the whole episode to a happy conclusion, he invited them all, in token of forgiveness and amity, to a splendid banquet.

But here again their offences were brought to their remembrance, in a manner that must have covered them with confusion, more than the bitterest reproaches. In the midst of the repast, when all were busily engaged with the pleasant occupation of the hour, the king called loudly for the choicest wine, and it was Lambert Simnel who brought in the flagons, and served round the purple juice to the Irish guests. Their king was their cup-bearer!

One may imagine the glances that they interchanged one with another, and the shame which they must have felt on being thus pointedly, yet delicately, re-

mind of their former treason, while experiencing their monarch's clemency for new offences.

Henry quietly observed them all, and trusted to the efficacy of his lessons.

A few days afterwards the Irish nobles accompanied the king in a stately procession; perhaps to allow them to see his greatness, and to convince them, by the enthusiasm of the populace, how securely he was seated on the throne.

He then dismissed them with costly gifts and expressions of perfect confidence and friendly regard.

It was no fault of the Earl of Kildare that he shortly afterwards received a present from Germany, as one to whom such gift would be of special service; it was none other than six muskets, the first that were ever seen in Ireland, and the marvellous deadly powers of which it was thought might even turn the tide of battle, and ensure victory to the possessors.\*

In commanding the services of Lambert Simnel at the state banquet to his Irish guests, Henry may probably have desired not only to remind the nobles of their treason, but also to satisfy himself whether the youth had indeed reconciled himself to his servile position.

Lambert, an actor by nature, played his new part of royal cup-bearer to perfection; and Henry's keen eye

\* A.D. 1490.

not only failed to detect any interchange of glances between the pretender and his late supporters, but even any expression of discontent in his countenance.

Accustomed to give his personal attention to every detail, he had not failed in the mean time to inquire from the master cook as to the general demeanour of the youth; and one day, shortly after the departure of the Irish nobles, he summoned him to his presence, and inquired if he was satisfied with his condition.

"Why should I complain when my lot in life is fixed?" replied Simnel, hesitating.

"What have you to complain of?" demanded Henry sternly.

"Not of being a scullion in my Sovereign's kitchen," said the youth with his usual address, "but of the taunts and jeerings of my fellows, who thus force upon my daily remembrance past events, which I strive to forget, in accordance, my lord, with your injunction and desire."

"Well, boy, you have richly merited their taunts, and it is not in their nature to forbear from such tempting game."

"Most true, no doubt, my liege; but I fear me much that it is not in my nature always to forbear from resenting their insults. Even a baker's son may not suffer his equals to mock him with impunity."

His air had the dignity of a prince as he concluded,

and Henry judged that it might not be well to chafe such a spirit too much.

"I am content with your submission thus far," he answered more affably, "and will remove you from this snare and vexation if you will, and give you more congenial employment to boot. You can fly a hawk?"

"Oh yes, my liege!" eagerly replied the youth—while his eyes flashed with pleasure at the reminiscence of past enjoyment.

"Well, then, I will appoint you my falconer. I hear that death has made a vacancy just now."

"Thanks, thanks, my gracious lord; that makes me once more happy; and my poor mother—she will think me great, and still be proud of her son."

"But mark me, young man—the example of a soaring falcon must not rouse you to plume your close-clipped pinions for any new flight."

"No, my lord, my ambition is satisfied with this honour. I feel that I can be happy in that position, and happiness is contentment. Ambition and I are parted evermore. I humbly take leave, my gracious lord."

Shortly afterwards he was installed in the office of royal falconer, with the emoluments and perquisites appertaining thereto. And thus History takes leave of

**Lambert Sinnel.**



# EARL GERALD.

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## TO MY NEPHEWS AND NIECES.

You have asked me to write a story on purpose for you ; so I will tell you one of a boy that was left an orphan, more than three hundred years ago, under the most cruel and peculiar circumstances. This was Gerald, the youngest son of the Earl of Kildare, in the reign of Henry VIII.

When he heard that he was left quite lonely in the world, he was lying very sick with the smallpox in one of his father's castles in Ireland. He was then about eleven years old, and when in health, was a fine manly boy, and very handsome too.

He had been left in the Castle of Donore, in County Kildare, under the charge of his tutor, a very kind and sensible man, named Thomas Leverous ; and who was also foster-brother to the boy's father, and greatly attached to him.

This earl, as well as his father before him, had

several times been entrusted by the kings of England in whose reigns they lived, with the chief governorship of Ireland, under the title of Lord Deputy; and had acquitted themselves well in that very difficult office, so far as Irish affairs were concerned; although they had on several occasions been led to join in the rebellions which agitated the country consequent on the long and disastrous wars of the Roses.

Either from these causes, or the false accusations of enemies, these noblemen had at various times been summoned to appear before the king in London to give an account of their conduct.

On one of these occasions Gerald's father had been unjustly imprisoned in the Tower for some years by Henry VIII.; but he was liberated and restored to all his honours and titles about the year 1530. Unfortunately, however, he no longer governed with his former wisdom and prudence, on account, it is thought, of a severe wound which he had received on his head, and which may have somewhat disturbed his reason. At any rate, through his misgovernment, the country fell into a sad state of disorder, and King Henry again summoned him to appear before him in London. He left, however, the choice of a Deputy during his absence to the earl himself; and, under the impression that he should soon return, he appointed his eldest son, Thomas

a young man of only twenty-one years, and of a very rash and violent character.

What followed you will read in history, so I will only state that at the time when our little Gerald was lying sick in Ireland, both his father and elder brother Thomas were prisoners in the Tower of London ; the father for misgovernment, the son for open rebellion. And now I will proceed with my story.

The Castle of Donore was not one of the largest of the earl's strongholds, neither must you imagine any splendour of decoration, or luxury of furniture, in the Irish castles of that time. There had been too constant a succession of wars or civil strife, for centuries before, to tempt any one to the acquisition of much moveable property ; and, besides, a country that is always distracted by contests has no time to cultivate the arts of peace.

You may therefore, if you please, picture to yourselves young Gerald lying on a rudely made four-post bed, with a faded brocaded curtain of foreign fabric, and a thick, well-worn coverlet of quilted silk ; the room is small and dark, with one little deep-set window without glass ; the walls are partly covered with large pieces of tapestry work, but in other parts the unplastered stone appears ; the floor is thickly strewed with rushes ; a table, on which are two or three cups and bottles, a massive press of some

foreign wood, and a few heavy chairs, complete the furniture.

"Be patient, be patient, dear boy! Would you wish that your father should find his little playfellow, his pet, his namesake, disfigured when he returns? Nay, put down your hands from your face, Gerald, or I must tie them, indeed I must!"

The boy turned fretfully upon his couch, rubbing his cheek upon the pillow.

"Gerald, you grieve me with this impatience, and grieve God who sent you this trial of your fortitude!"

"Grieve *you*, master! I would not do that for anything!" And the sick boy turned suddenly round again, and fixed his weak and heavy eyes upon the speaker. "I would not grieve you, and I know I ought not to rebel against the will of God; but, indeed, it is very hard to bear; and what, master, had I done to deserve it?"

A tear sprung to the eye of his kind guardian, and he did not instantly reply, but held a horn cup with some cooling drink to the boy's fevered lips.

"What do you think I had done to deserve this terrible sickness, master?" again asked Gerald. "Was it, think you, that I was so angry when Miles de Burgh shot his arrow right to the mark after I had missed it? or was it that I flung a stone at the

Desmond soldier who teased me so much, asking an alms? Indeed, I was very sorry for both afterwards."

"I know you were, dear boy; but though we all do many wrong things, and have many sinful thoughts that deserve the punishment of Heaven, you must not think that sickness, and troubles, and griefs come always to us as punishments; they are sometimes mercies and blessings."

"Sickness and pain a blessing! how can that be?"

"Suppose now that you were to have been taken to London with your brother Thomas but for this illness preventing, and that the ship in which he went was lost in the stormy waves; would not the illness be a blessing which saved you from sharing his fate?"

"Yes, I see what you mean now; but listen, master, listen! There are horses coming into the courtyard; there are strange voices below!"

Master Leverous rose, and beckoning to an old woman, who was seated on a low stool in a corner, spinning a woollen thread from a spindle, he left the room.

The old woman's name was Bridget. She brought her low wooden stool from the corner, and seating herself near the sick boy, continued mechanically spinning the woollen yarn into thread, while looking at Gerald, and talking to him in the following manner.

"Are you better, darling Lord Gerald? Ochone! What's the use of asking, when your face is not your own sweet, pretty face at all, but just a mass of sores! Woe's me, to see this day!"

"Do not go on that way, Bridget," said the boy, fretfully, "it does me harm. Master Leverous says I shall get well if I keep quiet, and all the ugly spots will go away as if they had never been."

"Lord grant it! Good Master Leverous says it to comfort you, may be. But I had a little son myself long ago; he was never so comely as you,—I wouldn't say he was: but he became just as ugly with this nasty smallpox, and he never was fit to look at after; never, till he was killed by a pike wound when helping Lord James, your grandfather's brother, to take the Castle of Carlow."

"That's better talk, Bridget; I like to hear all about the war of Richard Plantagenet, that they call Perkin Warbeck. I wish I had been a man then, to fight for him as my grandfather did!"

"There's no fear that ye'll lack the chance of dying in battle, if you get through this sickness, Lord Gerald. At least, there has been nothing but one weary war after another—one party up, another party down—ever since I was born, or my mother before me. He, he, he! I should begin to look for the end of the world if I saw two years together of peace."

"Well, Bridget, let your tongue have peace now ; I'm listening."

"To what, honey?"

"To the number of voices, and the quiet way they are talking in. Bridget, Bridget, something has happened, I am sure,—something bad, or Master Leverous would have come back to me by this time."

"Bad, do you think, Lord Gerald? I don't know, for my part, when it is that good happens. May be they have put your brother into that terrible London Tower, or cut off his head like your father's."

"Do not say that! do not! Master Leverous says he is sure it is not true; and that my brother Thomas was very wrong to break out into rebellion just now for an idle rumour! And did he not tell me to-day not to tear my face, that my dear, dear father may know his boy again when he comes home. He came back before, after being years in the Tower, and he will again. Yes, yes, he will! But go, Bridget,—I cannot bear waiting in this way,—go and bring me news!"

"Me, Lord Gerald! Did not Master Leverous bid me not to leave you a moment? besides, bad news always travels fast enough. But here he comes, surely, just in time!"

And the old dame carried her stool back to the dark corner, and spun her worsted thread from the spindle as before.

"Oh, master, dear master, how grave you look!" cried Gerald, as with slow steps the ecclesiastic advanced towards him. "What is it that has happened? Tell me, tell me quickly. Was he—was my father—I cannot speak it—was it as Thomas believed?"

"No, my son; your poor brother Thomas was quite wrong—quite, throughout. Your father was not be-headed, but—" The voice of the good priest trembled greatly, and without adding more, he walked to the little deep-set window, and beckoned old Bridget to his side.

"Messengers have come from England, Bridget."

"Aye! and brought ill news, I'll engage."

"Go below and you will hear it only too soon. But, Bridget, mark me! before you ask one question, or listen to one word, send a horseman to bring back the leech to the castle at once."

"Bring him back!" exclaimed the old dame, with more of feeling in her tone than she usually displayed.

"Do you think the darling boy is worse?"

"No, Bridget; but I fear he may be so, when he hears all the sad, sad news I have to tell. But see—he grows impatient. Go and do as I have said. And mark me again, woman, do not come back here till your wailing is over, and you can be still and calm, as becomes those who tend upon the sick. Go!"



Dame Bridget obeyed, and Master Leverous walked slowly to the boy's bedside.

"You should not keep me waiting so long!" cried Gerald rather angrily; "you should answer me. I have been calling to you so often while you went on talking to that stupid old woman!"

"Patience, patience, Gerald, my poor boy!"

"How can I help being impatient! Is my father coming? Is he well? You have not even told me that yet, master. How are my uncles? What have they done with Thomas? Who is it that has arrived, and what is the news they have brought?"

"It is nothing good, Gerald—or rather, it is—I fear to tell you."

"Oh, master!" And Gerald's heart grew sick, and his lips very pale; he said no more, but lay there still and trembling.

His loving tutor bowed himself down over the boy and burst into tears. He had controlled himself so long, that now his sobs shook the bed. Presently he felt Gerald's hand wandering amongst his hair, and heard him ask in sad low tones, "Who is it that is dead?"

"All, all, poor boy! All swept away in the ruthless tyrant's rage! Oh, Gerald, life of my heart, I would have kept it from you if I could, but the very birds of the air would have told the frightful tale. All

Ireland will ring with it from sea to sea! Poor Thomas, your poor misguided, rash, and headstrong brother perhaps deserved his fate. The king would listen to no pleading in his favour—no mercy on the score of his youth; he was tried, and beheaded. And oh, my Gerald, the same blood-stained axe struck off the heads of your five noble uncles! All, all gone, and some at least blameless!”

There was a stillness as of death in that dimly-lighted chamber. Gerald had fainted.

This incident instantly restored to Master Leverous his habitual self-command. He called no further help, but applied such restoratives as he had at hand, and as soon as Gerald was able to swallow, he mixed an opiate draught to tranquillise his agitated nerves.

“My father?” were the boy’s first words; “you said he was not—” He could not finish the terrible sentence.

“I said truly, Gerald. Lord Thomas, on arriving in London, found that he was alive; and though still detained a prisoner, there had been no question even of sentence of death against him. So your poor misguided brother’s reckless rebellion had not even vengeance to extenuate it; for a mere rumour he committed all the havoc, and brought this woful ruin on his noble house. May God forgive him, but much innocent blood lies upon his head.”

"But tell me of my father."

"Alas, dear Gerald! two messengers have arrived together, for the first had to wait at Bristol for a ship. One brought the woful tidings I have already given you, the second left London some days later, and completes the tragic tale. Your noble father, broken already in health with his confinement, sunk under this fearful catastrophe. We shall never see him more, Gerald! He, whom I have loved from the cradle as a brother, friend, and master, all in one, is gone?"

Gerald wept and sobbed until quite exhausted with his grief. Then the soothing influence of the opiate, so thoughtfully administered, began to extend itself over his feeble frame; the shadows of evening crept over each object in the gloomy chamber, and lighting a lamp, Master Leverous prepared to watch, and weep, and pray, beside his dear pupil's couch, through the long hours of that unhappy night.

The dreadful news he had heard, as might have been expected, made poor Gerald extremely ill again. The doctor who had been sent for said nothing could be done, for the crisis of the smallpox was already past, and he could not tell if it was the will of God to save alive this sole survivor of a noble family or not.

For many days, indeed, to human judgment it remained a very doubtful point, for the poor boy lay in

a passive helpless state ; very, very sad, and feeble as an infant. Master Leverous came often to see him, but could not remain constantly at his side as before, for the castle was always in a stir with people coming and going. Many came to learn the truth of the dreadful tidings, for there were no newspapers to spread intelligence of what occurred in those days. Others came to inquire after the health and safety of the little earl ; but others there were that hovered about the castle for no good purpose.

The wrath of King Henry was not appeased by the blood of Thomas of Kildare and his five uncles, nor yet by the death of the broken-hearted old earl. While a child of his survived, he knew that all the kinsmen and followers, or clan of Kildare, would look to him as their chief ; and on every occasion, after such injuries as they had received, would surely enrol themselves in the rank of his enemies.

Therefore the king issued a proclamation for the capture of little Gerald, wishing, no doubt, to bring him up at the English Court, to train him in English habits and feelings, and detach him from every national influence and predilection.

When Master Leverous heard these news, he became greatly fearful that he could not protect the boy ; he was afraid of bringing many troops to defend the place, because it would instantly show the English

that the child they sought was there ; and he knew besides that they could not make an effectual resistance if a strong force were to invest the castle. So he preferred the policy of keeping the gates barred, and the drawbridge raised, and allowing as few persons as possible to be seen coming and going ; while these were only admitted by the postern, as if there were no persons of note within the place.

Meanwhile he had scouts out in all directions, who always came and went under cover of the night, and brought information if any suspicious-looking strangers appeared in the neighbourhood.

At length, by very slow degrees, the strength of Gerald was restored. In his languid state of convalescence, sorrow had been deadened ; while the feeling of returning health, in spite of himself, gladdened his young heart. Master Leverous, too, was full of chastened joy when he took his young charge forth into the courtyard to breathe once more the fresh pure air of heaven. The few kinsmen and followers who were there gathered around the boy with tears in their eyes, and heartfelt blessings on their lips ; while, mingled with their congratulations on his recovery, were uttered promises of fidelity to him as their chief ; though some echoed in whispers the loud lamentations of old Bridget for the blighted beauty of their darling young lord.

Rumours *will* spread, whatever precautions may be taken ; and very soon after this, Master Leverous had reason to fear that the agents of the king were on the right scent, so he no longer delayed the execution of a project which he had early contemplated, which was, to remove Gerald secretly from Donore Castle, and place him under the protection of his aunt, the sister of the late earl.

Gerald soon quite enjoyed the preparations for his escape. Everything was managed as quietly as possible, but the excitement increased with every day, and latterly with every hour. At length the scouts came in with their last report that the way was clear from any lurking foes, and Gerald, in the disguise of a horse-boy, descended to take a farewell supper with his followers.

Servants and retainers of every rank were present on the occasion, but the hearts of most were very anxious, and full of gloomy forebodings. Already Henry had confiscated the titles and estates of the family of the Fitzgeralds of Kildare. He was a mighty monarch : what hope then that this young boy, lately risen from a bed of sickness, should ever be able to cope with him, or raise his fallen house from the depth of misfortune to which it had sunk !

“Fill to the brim !” said Master Leverous, when

the repast was over, "and pledge your young lord in a parting cup."

They all obeyed; and, standing with their drinking horns in hand, with one voice they cried out, "God bless and protect our young Lord Gerald."

"The last of his race!" groaned one.

"May he live to restore the glory of his house!" added another, more hopefully.

"And may he live to be avenged to the full on all his enemies!" cried a stalwart squire, dashing his heavy hand with emphasis upon the table.

"Accursed be they!" groaned and shouted many.

"Peace," cried Master Leverous; "say rather, may he learn wisdom and forbearance from his unfortunate brother's fate! Lord Gerald, we must be going; bid your faithful friends farewell."

Then Gerald stood up in his place at the head of the board, and with a voice trembling at first with emotion, but growing firm and almost manly as he proceeded, he made his first public speech.

"Dear kinsmen, friends, and followers, I thank you for your love; for your love to me, but much, much more to those that are gone. While I live it shall be my constant effort to worthily fill my noble father's place. I scarcely may hope to do it, but it will always be my aim. Dear friends, I must bid you all farewell now, to meet, I trust, in a happier time. I shall not

forget one among you, however long the day. Once more, I thank you for your love to me and all our house."

He sat down, crimsoned all over, and burst into tears. Poor Gerald had a very warm, feeling heart. There was nothing to be ashamed of in those tears; quite the contrary: but if any boy of his age thinks there was, he may remember, in his excuse, that Gerald was scarcely yet recovered from a very long illness.

Master Leverous pressed his pupil's hand very affectionately, and announcing that it was quite time to depart, there was instant bustle of preparation, every one hurrying here and there, collecting whatever was required for the journey.

Gerald was about to follow his preceptor from the hall, when the women of the household, headed by old Bridget, gathered around him to kiss his hand and give him their special good wishes.

The old dame flung her distaff on the ground, and wrung her withered hands, wailing aloud. Through her cries were heard the words, "I've nursed you through the sore sickness and the heavy sorrow now; and may sickness and sorrow never come near you again, acushla. Amen."

"Amen!" responded all the other women.

"Lord Gerald, we wait you; all is ready," cried the voice of Master Leverous.



And Gerald threw his arm round old Bridget's neck and kissed her; then, shaking hands hurriedly with as many others as were sufficiently near, he hastened forth to join the cavalcade. It was now deep twilight, and they had twelve miles to ride that night.

Gerald felt a sensation of delight as he once more mounted his favorite pony Broderic, and found himself riding through the open country, his tutor at his side, a guide in advance, and three armed followers a little distance in the rear.

The aunt of Gerald Fitzgerald was a widow lady, living in South Munster, so that our travellers' journey was not accomplished for many days. The length of each day's ride was chiefly regulated by Gerald's strength, but also by finding fitting resting-places. There were many castles on their route, where the little earl would have received a welcome; but Master Leverous preferred even making a circuit to avoid the neighbourhood of these, his object being to leave no trace of their progress. He therefore chose some humble farmhouse or mountain hostelry for their place of rest, and rough indeed was the accommodation they usually found; for in those days even the "dry potato" was not to be met with; yet this wandering life did wonders for Gerald's restoration to health and

spirits, and he gained strength and improved in good looks every day.

From the same motive of secrecy, the three armed men were dismissed after the first day's journey, and even the guide, before they reached their destination, that there might be no witness to report the place of their asylum, or be induced by threats or bribes to betray it.

Thus, very toilworn, covered with dust, and riding jaded horses with drooping heads, Master Leverous and his pupil reached the castle of the young earl's aunt, the Princess of Carbery.

This title of princess must not lead you to fancy any great power or splendour; most of the old Irish principalities, like many on the Continent, were rather lordships, with sometimes but very limited territory.

Eleanour, the youngest sister of the poor broken-hearted Earl of Kildare, had married Mac Arthy Reagh, Prince of Carbery, in early life; and though she had been some years a widow, was still a very comely middle-aged lady.

She lived a very retired life in her late husband's castle of Kilbrittan, which had been bequeathed to her with part of his lands, and was somewhat surprised, when seated at tapestry work with her maidens, one afternoon, to receive a message that two weary travellers, a man and a boy, waited at the gate,

and requested urgently to be admitted to her presence.

"To my presence?" she inquired; "are you sure they wish that? Is it not rather rest and refreshment that they require, which the steward of my household can supply?"

"No, lady, they are urgent to speak privately with you, and that without delay."

"Admit them, then; I will descend to the hall; and you, Gervaise, with two of your fellows, keep near at hand, but out of earshot."

The lady, a little wondering and excited, for her castle was in a remote and unfrequented situation, hastened to the hall, and had just seated herself in her chair of state, when the travellers entered at the opposite side.

Master Leverous was closely muffled in his riding cloak. He glanced round suspiciously, but seeing no other person present, he threw off his outer garment, and appeared in the costume of a priest. This greatly reassured the Princess of Carbery, who, from the mysterious demeanour of her guests, was beginning to feel alarmed; which indeed was not surprising—so many bad deeds were done in those wild, disordered times. She had even thought it possible that the king of England might be so bent upon the extermination of the Fitzgeralds as to seek her out in her harmless

seclusion ; but the clerical dress dissipated such apprehensions for the present.

Taking his pupil by the hand, Master Leverous led him up to the lady. " I have brought you," he said, " the last scion of your race ; he claims from you refuge and protection."

Gerald knelt on the footstool before the chair of state, and would have kissed the hand of his aunt, but she withheld it, and looked inquiringly at the priest.

" It is so indeed, honoured lady ; in this travel-worn youth, dressed as a humble groom, you see your nephew Gerald ; a fugitive now, but, with Heaven to aid him, one day Earl of Kildare."

Dame Eleanour then threw her arms around his neck, and wept with grief and love.

The travellers were too tired for conversation then. A warm bath was prepared at once for their refreshment, and a repast with all convenient speed ; but all discourse, except some desultory questions and replies, was postponed till after a long night's repose had renewed their strength.

The Princess of Carbery was a very kind and sensible woman, and Gerald's young heart expanded with affection towards her, rejoicing too in the feeling that he had still a relation to cling to. The sense of isolation is so terrible to the young !

On her part, also, Dame Eleanour soon grew very fond of her nephew, who brought vividly back to her remembrance her early life ; and every day she told the delighted boy fresh stories of her brave band of brothers, his noble uncles, when they were young like him. But though she was glad to have the boy with her, her pleasure was troubled by a constant anxiety for his safety.

Gerald, in this period of comfort and repose, rapidly improved in strength, activity, and comeliness. The disfigurement produced by his malady quite disappeared, he was tall, graceful, and manly for his years, and was encouraged by Master Leverous in the exercise of every athletic sport that could be enjoyed in the courtyard, or the immediate neighbourhood of the castle ; but he was never suffered to join in the chase, or ride forth into the country, nor to visit any of the neighbouring castles, and the boy at last began to feel the restraint very irksome.

He had sense enough, however, to see the wisdom of his tutor's commands and his aunt's entreaties, for the king of England, when he heard that the boy had escaped from Donore, had offered a large reward for his apprehension. Perhaps, indeed, he might have been carried off forcibly from his childhood's home but for the protection which his much dreaded malady temporarily afforded him ; verifying what his tutor had said

to him,—that our sufferings are often blessings in disguise.

The Princess of Carbery and Master Leverous had many long and serious conversations as to how they might best secure the safety of the little earl; for they both equally felt that though his present domicile was very suitable for a temporary refuge, yet a lonely lady was not the most fitting protector for the persecuted youth.

So at length Dame Eleanour, with some hesitation, confided to Master Leverous that, some time before, O'Donnel, the chief of Tyrconnel, had made her proposals of marriage,—that she had refused him, having resolved never to take a second husband; but that, now that the duty of protecting Gerald had devolved upon her, as his nearest surviving relation, she saw the question in a new light, and doubted if it were not incumbent on her to secure the alliance of so brave and powerful a noble as O'Donnel, if indeed it were still at her option.

Master Leverous was delighted with the idea; and indeed it had often occurred to him that it would be well, even for her own sake, that the princess should marry again, and since she had already received overtures from a nobleman of whom she had a good opinion, there was the less difficulty in the case.

Accordingly the measure was promptly decided on;

and Master Leverous set forth on a confidential mission to the O'Donnel, and explained his errand with his usual tact and ability.

It would not do to tell the chief of Tyrconnel that it was *only* the desire to secure a powerful protector for her nephew that induced the Princess of Carbery to change her views; so he began by describing the lonely position of the widow, and the alarms to which she was subjected in such perilous and unsettled times. Then he spoke of the high estimation in which she held the brave chieftain to whom he was speaking, and confessed that the lady had confided to him the flattering proposals he had made her; and that though she had declined them at the time, now that years had blunted the keen edge of her grief for her departed husband, he (Master Leverous) thought that she might easily be induced to reverse her decision, if the chief of Tryconnel, on his part, still desired their union.

O'Donnel's countenance showed that he was pleased; so Leverous went on, adding, as a sort of secondary matter, that the difficulty of affording protection to her young nephew Kildare would probably furnish another inducement. Indeed, so great was this difficulty, that he foresaw clearly that if O'Donnel was disinclined, she must eventually be obliged to seek elsewhere for an alliance.

This is what is called diplomacy—a very necessary

practice in a world like ours, where people are in doubt of each other's sentiments, and wish to ascertain them. Still Master Leverous was careful to tell the truth, and the whole truth, although he brought such points into more prominent view as he thought would be most acceptable to his auditor.

The parties in this case very soon perfectly understood each other, and when Master Leverous returned to Carbery, the chief of Tyrconnel accompanied him ; and very shortly afterwards the widow of Mac Arthy Reagh became the wife of the O'Donnel, who at once removed her and Gerald to the comparatively secure shelter of his own fortified and well-garrisoned castle ; Master Leverous still accompanying his beloved pupil, and continuing to instruct him in all the branches of learning required by an accomplished gentleman of that period.

Still poor Gerald was not safe ; perhaps even less so than in his former more obscure position. The marriage of the Princess of Carbery could not be concealed from public knowledge, and the motive was at least surmised.

King Henry, considering that he would soon cease to be a child, and more especially when supported by his influential step-father, would become dangerous to the English cause in Ireland, now offered still larger



rewards for his seizure; and the marriage festivities were hardly over, when suspicious-looking strangers were reported to be lurking about in the neighbourhood.

Again and again these alarms were renewed, till Gerald was obliged to live almost like a prisoner; and it was judged better to send him away secretly until the ardour of the search abated; and so unpleasant was it to the boy to feel that he could not stir without the chance of two or three hireling spies springing upon him, that, much as he regretted parting with his aunt and tutor, he consented, however reluctantly, to the change.

On this occasion he rode by night, under the escort of a small body of armed men, and arrived about day-break at a little castle, or rather a simple square tower, situated on a steep rock, and belonging to a cousin of O'Donnel.

This commanded a view over a wide extent of open country, where no person could approach unobserved; and Gerald had more liberty than 'before, but, otherwise, a less congenial mode of life.

At one time, the rumour that a party of English soldiers were in search of him compelled him to remain concealed for some days in the rude hut of a peasant in an obscure village. On another occasion he found refuge in a priory in the domain of Tyrconnel;

and after a year thus passed in various asylums, but always under the watchful protection of his step-father, as the agents of Henry showed no sign of slackening their efforts to discover his hiding-place, it was found expedient by his friends to send him out of the country.

Master Leverous had previously written to Cardinal Pole, a kinsman of the house of Kildare, and to some other eminent persons, to implore their protection for the persecuted youth. All replied in the most encouraging terms, and the Cardinal liberally undertook to be at the expense of his maintenance until some favourable turn in his affairs should take place ; for it must be remembered that all the estates of the earldom of Kildare were confiscated to the Crown, the family being adjudged, one and all, traitors to the king. Cardinal Pole was himself in deep disgrace with Henry for having earnestly opposed that monarch's divorce from Katherine of Arragon ; and this may have further inclined him to protect the victim of his injustice.

Young Gerald was enraptured at this change ; he panted with all the eagerness of his age and character to see the world, to mix with men on the footing of a man, which, as the youthful chieftain of a lordly house, he was instructed to feel that it behoved him to do ; but above all, he rejoiced in the idea of being able to

walk abroad with head erect, free from the fear of lurking spies or foes ; for it is a truth that, however innocent of all offence a person living in concealment may be, there is something essentially humiliating and degrading in the very fact of lurking furtively in secret places, and shrinking from the eye of man ; and this habit of life, if long continued, must inevitably lower the tone of the character, and curb the freedom of the spirit.

Master Leverous watched carefully to prevent these injurious effects with Gerald, and it made one among the many powerful motives which induced him to advocate the youth's abandonment of his native land till happier days should dawn.

The parting with his affectionate aunt was Gerald's only grief ; she wept much, and he a little, as they bade each other farewell, it might be for ever ; and with many motherly admonitions about the care of his health, his clothes, and his money, she presented him with 140 pieces of gold—equal to about £300 of our money—with which to pay his expenses until he could reach his new protector, the learned and enlightened Reginald Pole.

Lord Gerald Fitzgerald, with his tutor and two brave and faithful servants of his house, took shipping in a French barque at Waterford, and landed at Dunkirk, where many Irish nobles, whom the troubles

of former years had driven from their country, received the young earl warmly.

Delaying only till another ship set sail, they proceeded to St. Malo, whence they pursued their journey by land to Paris; and as soon as Gerald was equipped in a manner suitable at once to his rank and his fallen fortunes, he was presented in due form at the French court.

The hitherto secluded Gerald then suddenly found himself a centre of attraction—petted as a handsome boy by ladies, admired as a manly and noble-minded youth by men, and looked on with jealousy by those of his own years, as being held up to them as a model for their imitation.

All this might probably have proved injurious to Gerald, tarnishing all his really fine qualities by an unseemly vanity, had not the hurry and excitement of perpetual novelty given his mind more interesting subjects of contemplation than even his own merits; besides, everything was so new to him, that he felt his own ignorance every moment, although he had the tact and good sense to bear himself always as if accustomed to the situation, so as to avoid exposing himself to the ridicule of strangers; and when really in a difficulty, his vigilant friend, Master Leverous, was ever near to assist him.

But alas! these halcyon days did not last long.

Even in the French king's court the English monarch's persecuting enmity was felt. The English ambassador in Paris had mentioned in his despatches the arrival of the young scion of Kildare, and his flattering reception by Francis I. ; and the ambassador presently received imperative orders to demand the surrender of the youth into his hands as a rebellious English subject, in virtue of a treaty lately concluded between the two monarchs.

Francis, however, purposely delayed to give his answer, and in the mean time kindly sent an intimation of the peril to Master Leverous, who, instantly acting upon the hint, fled from Paris with his pupil, taking the direction of Flanders.

The absence of the Irish strangers from the court circles was quickly noticed, and the ambassador, guessing at once that his destined captive had taken alarm, sent Sir James Sherlock, one of his attachés, in pursuit of the fugitives ; but this also became instantly known, and as soon as he was informed of it, King Francis desired that a courier should be despatched in the same direction, bearing an order to the governor of Valenciennes to arrest Sir James immediately upon his arrival, and keep him in safe custody until he received further orders.

Accordingly, the governor of Valenciennes had the even tenor of his life ruffled one day by a series of excitements.

First there arrived, after nightfall, young Gerald Fitzgerald and his tutor, bearing credentials sealed with the royal seal, which enjoined all loyal subjects to speed them on their way.

Next, before daybreak, and while the fugitives were still enjoying the repose requisite for the prosecution of their journey, arrived,

“Bloody with spurring, fiery red with haste,”

the royal courier, who, from being better acquainted with the country, had anticipated, according to his instructions, the arrival of Sir James Sherlock, the order for whose arrest he delivered to the governor.

Lastly arrived Sir James himself; and no sooner had he passed through the gates of the city than, to his extreme amazement and indignation, he was seized by the authorities, and securely locked up in the guard-house.

In vain he threatened the governor with the wrath and vengeance of the king of England. The wrath of his own monarch was of more importance to him; so he let Sir James chafe as he might, and meanwhile provided fresh horses and a guide for our young friend Gerald, who thus succeeded in reaching Brussels in safety.

But even there security was not to be long enjoyed. The emissaries of the persevering Henry were soon

upon his track, and the protection of monarchs avails not to guard against the machinations of secret foes.

The Emperor Charles V., in whose dominions Gerald then was, was a personal friend of the family of Fitzgerald, some of whom had fought at his side in his wars against France; he therefore privately conveyed to the fugitive an intimation of the new danger that threatened him, and at the same time sent him a letter, recommending him to the protection of the Bishop of Liège, and granting him also a pension of a hundred crowns per month for his maintenance, until he should be in a position to dispense with it.

Six months were passed at Liège in tranquil security; but Gerald was impatient for a more active life, and greatly rejoiced when at length Cardinal Pole judged that a safe and fitting opportunity had arrived for making the journey into Italy.

On his arrival at Rome, Gerald was received with much kindness by his distinguished relative, who gave him apartments in his own palace, appointed him a suitable retinue, and everywhere introduced him as his kinsman. Shortly afterwards he accompanied him to Florence.

Then truly a happy life opened at length for our persecuted Gerald; on the threshold of manhood, when the mind is most keenly alive to new impres-

sions, and most eager for excitement, he was transported into one of the most beautiful and most refined cities of the time, and found himself in the midst of all that could delight a noble spirit and a cultivated mind.

Added to this, he shone there as one in a galaxy of stars ; he was courted and flattered by persons of the highest distinction, partly on account of his own personal merits and birthright of rank, and still more, perhaps, as the protégé of Cardinal Pole, whose character and talents commanded universal esteem, irrespective of his high ecclesiastical rank, as Bishop of Verona and Cardinal of Mantua.

Most of the noble edifices and splendid works of art, which waken still the enthusiastic admiration of travellers, were then in the freshness of their beauty, and made Florence indeed a city of delights ; but I will not pause to dwell on this familiar but never wearying theme, or to name the notables who flourished there at the time, but confine myself to my hero Gerald.

His life was truly at this period a constant holiday, filled with every species of enjoyment suitable to his years. But nothing was so much to his taste as the practice of arms and horsemanship.

A great portion of every day was spent in the tilting field, or "Lists," exercising himself with other young men, in every species of military pastime. And on



certain public occasions when Cosmo de Medici, the first Grand Duke of Tuscany, and his beautiful consort Eleanora of Naples, presided over the sports, it frequently happened that the young Earl of Kildare was declared the victor, and knelt to receive the prize from the fair hand of the Grand Duchess.

At length, when he had attained manhood, his matchless skill in horsemanship so far recommended him to the favour of Cosmo, that he appointed him commander-in-chief of his cavalry, in which capacity he saw some service in the field. He was also received into the Military Order of the Knights of Malta.

At length, after several years thus happily spent in Italy, the news spread through Europe that King Henry of England was dead : and the heart of Gerald bounded with a species of joy that it had never yet known, at the idea of returning, now that his foe had fallen, once more to his native land.

Many others beside Gerald had but too good reason to rejoice that the tyrant was removed ; and, but that we owe to him the first protection given to the reformed faith in our country, his memory would doubtless be held in execration even more than it now is.

Cardinal Pole gave his sanction and encouragement to the immediate return of his protégé to his native land, counselling him if he found the state of affairs

at all favourable, to lose no time in petitioning at once for a restoration to his confiscated title and estates.

Accordingly, the Earl of Kildare and his constant friend, Thomas Leverous, entreated permission of the Grand Duke to resign the situations which they held at his court ; for the wisdom and learning of Leverous had recommended him also to a public situation of trust ; and this being cheerfully accorded, they took a grateful leave of Cardinal Pole and their other numerous friends, and hastened with all convenient speed to England.

Edward VI., I need hardly remind you, tranquilly succeeded his father Henry VIII., and was of a character as contrary to his predecessor as possible, if the evidence given by his conduct in those early years is to be received in proof.

Encouraged by his mild and amiable disposition, the young Earl of Kildare ventured very soon after his arrival to present himself at the English Court, and petition for the removal of the attainder against his family, and his own restoration to his forfeited rights.

He had, however, as might be expected, to wait some time before the subject received the attention of the young king, who had so many other important matters daily pressed upon his notice ; and meanwhile Gerald employed himself in renewing a connexion with such

influential persons as were formerly on friendly terms with his family.

He mixed freely also in society, and by the aid of his fascinating manners, his estimable qualities, and many accomplishments, he gained friends everywhere.

Amongst the most ardent of these was Sir Anthony Browne, Knight of the Garter, who entered warmly into the cause of his young friend, and with frank hospitality invited him cordially to his house, while yet he was almost a stranger in London.

Perhaps it did not at first occur to Sir Anthony that he had a lovely daughter of about the same age as Gerald, and that familiar intercourse might lead to ardent attachment between them; however, he presently discovered that such was the result.

Lord Gerald, as I have already said, was singularly handsome in person and graceful in manners; while the polish and refinement of Italian training combined charmingly with the natural buoyant frankness of the Irish character. Thus when he tried to make himself liked he could hardly fail to succeed, and the guileless heart of Miss Browne was soon entirely his own.

Sir Anthony fortunately approved of the attachment; and fascinated himself with his young guest, the knowledge that his daughter's happiness was implicated, only redoubled his zeal in his service. He therefore exerted himself to the utmost in raising a strong party

to back the earl's suit, and having considerable interest at Court, his efforts, united to those which Cardinal Pole put in force, succeeded, at length, in obtaining from Edward the reversal of the attainder against the Fitzgeralds, and the restoration of his confiscated estates.

It was not, however, till two years later, in the reign of Mary, that his titles and honours were restored ; but it was a happy day for Gerald when, free and independent, with no sentence of outlawry menacing him with danger, and no sense of dependence fettering his free will, he besought, with all the passionate eloquence of long restrained affection, the hand of the fair girl whose heart he felt was his, almost from the first bright day in which they met.

So he married the daughter of Sir Anthony Browne, and they lived happily the rest of their days. That, I believe, is the orthodox ending of all old-fashioned tales : but I must not omit to mention that Gerald's gratitude to Master Leverous continued always, and that he aided in obtaining for him, in the course of time, the Bishopric of Kildare.

